Following the death of Yasser Arafat, many predicted that the Palestinian Authority would crumble into complete chaos. In fact, Palestinian institutions proved more resilient, and the Palestinian people showed greater determination for peace and self-determination than many expected. Consequently, the transition of power from President Arafat to President Abbas stands as a model for the region to emulate.

Mr. Speaker, the Palestinian elections of January 9 were clearly a proud day for Palestinians and a very positive step forward in the effort to broaden the reach peaceful, civil interaction. It is a clear mandate for President Abbas to pursue his agenda of peaceful negotiations with Israel in order to establish a viable, sovereign, and independent Palestinian state. It is now incumbent on the United States and Israel to support President Abbas in his effort to consolidate power, to generate political and economic benefits for the Palestinian people, and to engage seriously in the negotiation of a peace settlement. The recipe for a final agreement has been apparent to most of us for some time. Now all the ingredients appear to be assembled. Those interested in creating peace have no reason or excuse not to move forward.

COMMEMORATING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TEXAS TAVERN

HON. BOB GOODLATTE

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 8, 2005

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to recognize the Texas Tavern restaurant in Roanoke, Virginia on its 75th anniversary. Texas Tavern opened for business on February 13, 1930. It's known as ''Roanoke's Millionaires Club'' and for seating ''1,000 people—10 at a time.'' From breakfast to hot dogs, hamburgers, and chile, Texas Tavern's menu is as much an institution as the eatery itself.

The founder of the Texas Tavern was Nick Bullington, an advance man for the Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey Circus, who also hoped to open a small, short order restaurant in one of the cities he visited on the circus route around the United States. Bullington recognized that the railroad was making Roanoke a major city. He located a vacant lot on Church Avenue in downtown Roanoke for the restaurant. Construction began and a short five months later, the Texas Tavern was open for business.

Texas Tavern has been a family operation from day one. Nick Bullington's son, James G. Bullington, became owner and operator of the restaurant when his father passed away in 1942. In 1966, James N. Bullington became a night manager for his father and in 1983, he purchased the business and property on which the restaurant sits, ensuring that the Texas Tavern would remain in the small, whitewashed brick building it's always called home. Matt Bullington—Nick Bullington's great grandson—worked at the restaurant throughout college in the mid-1990s and then took over for his dad, serving today as the man at the helm of one of Roanoke's favorite gathering places.

To visit Texas Tavern is to visit a slice of Americana. The Cheesy Western and chile are the signature dishes that have kept diners—famous and otherwise—coming back for 75 years. Glen Miller, Debbie Reynolds, and even former Sixth District Congressman Caldwell Butler are on the roster of Texas Tavern aficionados, and so are Gerald Williams and Bill Ammons—two of the original customers who still eat there today. Estimates are that nine and a half million hot dogs and 1,100 tons of pinto beans have been served to those who've sat at the small counter—rubbing elbows with friends and foes alike but never leaving the restaurant unsatisfied.

The Texas Tavern has operated in the best spirit of American enterprise in Roanoke—the Star City of Virginia—for three-quarters of a century. I offer my congratulations to the Bullington family for helping show us that the American dream remains alive and well all these years later.

REMEMBERING CHANEY, GOODMAN, AND SCHWERNER

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 8, 2005

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the State of Mississippi's pursuit for justice as it has brought forth an indictment of noted Klansman Edgar Ray Killen for the murders of James E. Chaney, Andrew Goodman, and Michael Schwerner. As the State of Mississippi has been collecting evidence and investigating this case, I would like to submit the following excerpt from Olen Burrage's The Mississippi Murder of Goodman, Schwerner, and Chaney by Seth Cagin and Phillip Dray.

The owner of a local trucking company, Olen Burrage, was having a cattle pond dug on his property, five miles southwest of town on Highway 21. Burrage had hired Herman Tucker, one of his part-time drivers and the owner/operator of two Caterpillar dozers, to build the pond and the large dam that would restrain it. The Neshoba Klansman arranged for Billy Wayne Posey to arrive at midnight on the lane of the Burrage property with the bodies of Goodman, Schwerner, and Chaney. Once the bodies were placed in the center of the dam, fifteen or twenty feet down, Tucker would reseal it with one of the bulldozers. When the pond filled with rainwater, the place where the bodies were stashed would simply become an innocuous part of the Neshoba landscape—a Klansman version of a Choctaw burial mound.

''So you wanted to come to Mississippi?'' one of the murderers is reputed to have told the victims later that night. ''Well, now we're gonna let you stay here. We're not even gonna run you out. We're gonna let you stay here with us.'' (p. 55)

Killen, as organizer of the Neshoba and Lauderdale County klaverns of the White Knights of Mississippi and point man for the conspiracy, was eager to return to Philadelphia as soon as he had collected enough men for the operation. There were ''arrangements'' to be made, he explained to the men at Akin's. Quickly he sketched for them the plan he had devised in collusion with Neshoba County deputy sheriff Cecil Price and Billy Wayne Posey, and possibly—to infer from the events that would transpire—Hop Barnett and Olen Burrage. Deputy Price would release Goatee and the other two civil rights workers as soon as it got dark. Once the civil rights workers were turned loose and were alone out on the highway, they would be stopped by a Mississippi Highway Safety Patrol car and turned over to the Klan. (p. 336)

Billy Wayne Posey was among those who attempted the Bonanza alibi, but in fact Posey had been far too busy that day to watch television. His role in the conspiracy was to arrange for the disposal of the victims' bodies, a grisly task easily as complex as setting them up to be done away with in the first place. After Goodman, Schwerner, and Chaney were arrested late on the afternoon of June 21, Posey met with Olen Burrage, who owned a trucking firm and several pieces of farm property west of Philadelphia, and Herman Tucker, a bulldozer operator who occasionally worked for Burrage. This meeting took place either at Burrage's garage, southwest of Philadelphia, or at the Phillips 66 station.

Posey's arrangement with Burrage to use a dam being built on Burrage's property as a burial site for the three civil rights workers' was probably not the result of brainstorm thinking by the conspirators. In all likelihood, Burrage's dam site had been previously scouted out by the Neshoba klavern for its potential as a secret grave, perhaps as early as mid-May, when Mickey Schwerner's incursions into Longdale were becoming known to the Klansmen. Mississippi FBI agent John Proctor claims to have learned from an informant that Burrage once told a roomful of Neshoba Klansmen discussing the impending invasion of civil rights workers, ''Hell, I've got a dam that'll hold a hundred of them.'' Although the Meridian Klansmen had been instructed to leave Mickey Schwerner alone, the leaders of the Neshoba klavern had apparently been given Sam Bowers's approval to ''eliminate'' him if they caught him in Neshoba County. They may well have expected to have further opportunities to nab Schwerner on one of his visits to Longdale, and it is possible many elements of the conspiracy—the release from jail, the highway chase, and the secret burial—were loosely in place before June 21.

The previous summer, Burrage had consulted an agent of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Soil Conservation Service about joining a program under which landowners could obtain government funding for pond dams that met certain conservation requirements. Burrage's proposed dam met the program's specifications, but the approval of the funding was contingent upon periodic inspections of the construction site by agents from the Department of Agriculture. In May 1964, when Burrage finalized arrangements with Herman Tucker and authorized him to begin work on the dam, Burrage chose—for reason he never explained—to do so without participating in the government program. (pp. 340–342)

With the civil rights workers' bodies in the hole, Posey signaled Tucker to start moving. The tractor ran fifteen minutes as Tucker bladed off the top of the dam so it would look as though it had not been disturbed.

The eight Klansmen got into Barnette's car and the civil rights workers' station wagon for the short ride down highway 21 to Burrage's trucking garage. There the men replaced the license plates on Barnette's car, which had been removed earlier in Meridian, and Jordan was given all the gloves the men had worn and told to dispose of them. Tucker took a glass gallon jug and filled it with gasoline from one of Burrage's pumps, to use in setting fire to the station wagon. (p. 361)

Chaney, Goodman, Schwerner will be remembered in the State of Mississippi's history as extraordinary individuals doing whatever it took to end racial segregation and win social